



COMDTINST 1750.68

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COMMANDANT INSTRUCTION 1750.6B

Subj: THE ROLE OF COAST GUARD SPOUSES' CLUBS

Ref: (a) Coast Guard Morale, Welfare, and Recreation Manual,
COMDTINST M1710.13
(b) Invitational Travel, COMDTINST 12570.3

1. PURPOSE. This instruction promulgates Coast Guard policy on spouses' clubs' role supporting Coast Guard Work-Life awareness efforts.
2. ACTION. Area and district commanders and commanders of maintenance and logistics commands shall bring the contents of this instruction to the attention of local Coast Guard spouses' clubs, encourage their participation in family awareness programs, and vigorously support their activities consistent with local needs and available resources.
3. DIRECTIVES AFFECTED. COMDTINST 1750.6A is canceled.
4. DISCUSSION.
 - a. The Coast Guard has always recognized families as an essential part of our Service. The support spouses provide our members in performing their military duty is a source of strength and inspiration. Some clubs, now referred to as "Family" clubs, combine to include all Coast Guard members and family members. Spouses' clubs have four main goals: furnish educational information:

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provide a support system; offer community service; and create fellowship. All clubs seek to improve their members' and their communities' quality of life.

- b. As family members, spouses are entitled to many benefits and can lend their expertise and experience to improve others' awareness of and access to reliable and useful information, resources, and services that support and enrich Coast Guard families' and all service members' lives. For example, spouses: assist newly assigned families to reduce the stress involved in relocation; support the unit's ombudsman; assist sponsor programs: sponsor community service projects; review relocation packages: and provide community support in crises. Spouses' clubs often assist Work-Life Staffs to sponsor workshops or seminars on health and service benefits by donating refreshments or providing child care during the session. Spouses' clubs can be a contingency resource for Work-Life Staff events for which morale, welfare and recreation (MWR) funds may be lacking and appropriated resources are not authorized. Similarly the creative energy spouses' clubs represent can extend selected Work-Life initiatives. Spouses' clubs provide important community outreach for newcomers and may assist with orientation programs. Military spouses clearly have a vested interest in these and other aspects of military life.

5. POLICY.

- a. Coast Guard spouses' clubs are vitally important organizations that can significantly contribute to improving awareness of resources and services available to all our families. When appropriate, commands are encouraged to include spouses' clubs in command-sponsored functions. When possible, they may post spouses' club functions or meetings in the plan of week. Spouses' clubs should be encouraged to establish and maintain a point of contact with their unit. A local Work-Life staff point of contact may also be appropriate. Spouses' clubs cannot realize their potential unless commands actively seek out, encourage, assist, and support their local Coast Guard spouses' clubs in developing initiatives which enhance family awareness and their quality of life.
- b. Individual spouses' clubs' participation in family awareness programs is entirely voluntary, and specific activities may be subject to command guidance and approval according to reference (a). However, command interest and advocacy of this policy is important to mutually benefit the entire Coast Guard family and all service missions.

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- c. Spending appropriated funds on spouses' club activities or using Government equipment to print or copy spouses' club newsletters are prohibited by law. However, when their activities benefit all unit members, commands may allow spouses' clubs to use MWR equipment, such as copiers, on a no-cost, not-to-interfere basis. If no MWR copier is available, then with permission and using their **own** paper, clubs may use the copier used to print MWR material. Commands can support local spouses' clubs' efforts by making space available for meetings (when possible) and cosponsoring workshops, symposiums, and other forums designed to provide comprehensive information and referral service on a wide range of family related programs and issues. The command also may provide the spouses' clubs with permanent mailing and electronic mail addresses at the unit.
- d. Spouses' clubs may solicit funds and property from outside sources to raise monies necessary for the programs and good works for which the clubs are noted. When doing so, club members must be sensitive to the fact that because there is such a close and personal connection between the clubs and the Coast Guard, any' impropriety in their fund raising activities is likely to be imputed back to the Coast Guard. Additionally, depending upon the circumstances, an impropriety by the spouse in soliciting or accepting a gift could be imputed back to the Coast Guard member. Accordingly, commands should advise spouses' clubs to adhere to the following guidelines in all fund raising activities:

(1) Spouses' clubs may neither solicit nor accept contributions from prohibited sources, e.g., companies which the Coast Guard regulates or does business with see enclosure (1) to COMDTINST 5370.8A, "Standards of Conduct" for a more detailed discussion of the term "prohibited source."

(2) Auctioning rides on Coast Guard vessels or the use of other government property in conjunction with, or in furtherance of, fund raising activities is prohibited.

(3) The spouses' club must make it clear that it is separate and distinct from the Coast Guard, that it is the spouses' club which is doing the soliciting, that all contributions are voluntary, and that the Coast Guard in no way endorses the product or service solicited.

Because improprieties in spouses' club fund raising activities may be imputed back to the Coast Guard, commands should take notice of such activities within their areas of responsibility. Commands with questions regarding the propriety of spouses' club fund raising activities should seek advice from their servicing legal office.

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- e. The spouses' clubs' governing body is the National Council of Coast Guard Spouses' Clubs (NCCGSC), located in the Washington, D.C. area. Consisting of both officer and enlisted spouses, the Council guides and supports the clubs and publishes *The Greensheet*. This reproducible newsletter covers issues of interest to Coast Guard members and their families and is included in the individual Work-Life newsletters. The NCCGSC also sponsors a biannual Symposium to discuss current issues of concern to spouses' clubs. Commands may not issue invitational travel orders for ombudsmen to attend the Symposium because the Service does not consider it ombudsman training curriculum, nor does it fall under the training category reference (b) above specifies. The Council's liaison is in the Office of Work-Life, Individual and Family Support Division.

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